

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ROME 04267 01 OF 02 071916Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 SSO-00 SS-15 /028 W  
-----007049 071927Z /42

O 071820Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1117

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 4267

STADIS//////////

FOR EUR ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR GARDNER

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF NEW ITALIAN GOVERNMENT

1. THE FOLLOWING EVALUATIVE COMMENTS MUST OF NECESSITY BE PRELIMINARY AND TENTATIVE IN NATURE. IT IS NOT YET COMPLETELY CERTAIN THAT ANDREOTTI WILL SUCCEED IN PUTTING THE GOVERNMENT TOGETHER, ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS VERY LIKELY. IN ADDITION WE DO NOT KNOW IN DETAIL THE KIND OF BARGAIN THAT IS BEING STRUCK; THE PROGRAM AGREEMENT AND THE SHAPE OF THE NEW CABINET, WHEN THEY ARE FULLY KNOWN, WILL TELL US MORE. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS ARE WRITTEN ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT ANDREOTTI WILL SUCCEED IN PUTTING A GOVERNMENT TOGETHER WITH THE PCI PARTICIPATING IN THE "PROGRAM-MATIC-PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY" BUT WITH NO ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT PROGRAM OR CABINET.

2. INTRODUCTION: THE EVENTS OF THE LAST WEEK HAVE PROVED WHAT WE BELIEVED TO BE THE CASE ALL ALONG, THAT IS, THAT THE ORIGIN OF THE GOVERNMENT CRISIS AND THE KEY TO ITS RESOLUTION LIE IN THE PCI'S DEMAND FOR A POLITICAL "STEP FORWARD," AND THAT IT HAD LITTLE OR NOTHING TO DO WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE PROGRAM. THE MINIUTE THE  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ROME 04267 01 OF 02 071916Z

DC AGREED TO ACCEPT PCI PARTICIPATION IN A "PROGRAM-MATIC-PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY," THE CRISIS WAS TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES RESOLVED. PROBLEMS ON PROGRAM AND REFERENDA WERE DEALT WITH QUICKLY, AND OBVIOUSLY COULD HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH EQUAL FACILITY WITHOUT THE STIMULUS OF A GOVERNMENT CRISIS. THUS THE POLITICAL ISSUE -  
A STEP FORWARD FOR THE PCI--IS THE KEY TO EVALUATION

OF THE RESULTS OF THE CRISIS AND ITS MEANING FOR THE FUTURE.

3. WHAT DID THE PCI GAIN? THE PCI'S PARTICIPATION IN THE "PROGRAMMATIC-PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY" IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT "STEPS FORWARD" THE PCI HAS EVER MADE. IT PROVIDES THE LEGITIMIZATION THAT THE PCI HAS LONG SOUGHT. INDEED, SOME NON-COMMUNIST OBSERVERS ARE CHARACTERIZING IT AS THE LAST STEP TOWARD COMPLETE LEGITIMIZATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AS A NORMAL, ITALIAN, DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTY. THE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THIS SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED IN TERMS OF ITS IMPACT UPON THE ITALIAN ELECTORATE, FOR THE PCI HAS FOR MANY YEARS BEEN EXCLUDED FROM CONSIDERATION BY MANY ITALIAN VOTERS ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WAS NOT A DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND WAS TOO CLOSELY TIED TO THE SOVIET UNION.

4. IN TERMS OF SUBSTANTIVE POWER, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM PUBLIC IMAGE, THE SITUATION IS LESS CLEAR. THE PCI HAS LONG HAD MORE SUBSTANTIVE POWER IN PARLIAMENT AND IN THE GOVERNING PROCESS THAN THE APPEARANCES WOULD SUGGEST. THE MERE FACT THAT THE PCI CAN NOW EXERCISE THAT POWER OPENLY AND PUBLICLY WILL PROBABLY ALSO HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING IT SOMEWHAT IN THE END. HOWEVER, HOW MUCH IT WILL INCREASE WILL DEPEND IN PART  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ROME 04267 01 OF 02 071916Z

UPON HOW THE DC BEHAVES.

5. THE PCI'S GAIN WILL ALSO HAVE THE IMPORTANT EFFECT, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT RUN, OF UNIFYING THE PCI AND DAMPENING DOWN THE FRUSTRATIONS THAT THE "SLOWNESS" OF THE BERLINGUER LINE HAVE MADE INCREASINGLY VISIBLE IN RECENT MONTHS. (IN THE LONGER RUN, THE FRUSTRATIONS COULD REAPPEAR.) WITHOUT DOUBT, THE PCI WILL PROPAGANDIZE ITS NEW ROLE AS THE PENULTIMATE STEP TOWARD FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT, AS THE BEGINNING OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF ITALIAN SOCIETY INTO A "SOCIALIST" ONE UNDER THE "HEGEMONY OF THE WORKING CLASS", AND THUS AS A GREAT AND HISTORIC VICTORY FOR THE PARTY (ROME 4168, PARA. 4).

6. THE DC'S POSITION: THE DC WILL DOUBTLESS EMPHASIZE THAT A "PROGRAMMATIC-PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY" IS DIFFERENT FROM A "POLITICAL MAJORITY," BUT WE DOUBT THAT THE ELECTORATE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE ANY SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCE. HOW SUCCESSFUL THE DC'S EFFORTS ARE WILL DEPEND IN LARGE PART ON ITS TACTICS DURING THE NEXT 8 MONTHS. IF IT EMPHASIZES AND PUBLICLY TAKES THE POSITION THAT THE

GOVERNMENT IS INTENDED TO BE LIMITED IN TIME AND NECESSARY PRIMARILY TO ADDRESS THE EMERGENCIES IN THE ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC ORDER SECTORS, THE DC MIGHT HAVE MORE SUCCESS IN CONVINCING THE ELECTORATE THAT IT HAS NOT MADE A POLITICAL ALLIANCE WITH THE PCI. THE DC PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH IN THIS DIRECTION, ALTHOUGH THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT ANDREOTTI AND MORO WILL TEND AVOID SHARP CONFLICT AND AVOID FIXING A DEFINITE TERM FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT. IN ADDITION THE DC'S CREDIBILITY WILL BE TESTED BY WHETHER OR NOT IT AGREES TO THE FORMATION OF SIMILAR REGIMES IN REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT A NUMBER OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WILL FOLLOW THE SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 ROME 04267 01 OF 02 071916Z

NATIONAL EXAMPLE IMMEDIATELY.

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 ROME 04267 02 OF 02 071917Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 SSO-00 SS-15 /028 W  
-----007053 071932Z /42

O 071820Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1118

SECRET SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 4267

STADIS//////////

FOR EUR ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR GARDNER

7. THE FUTURE: IS THE NEXT STEP -- PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE CABINET-- INEVITABLE? THE BEST ANSWER PROBABLY IS THAT IT IS NOT INEVITABLE, BUT LIKELY. THE LONGER THE DC AND PIC PARTICIPATE IN THE SAME PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY THE MORE DIFFICULT IT WILL BE TO RETURN THE PCI TO THE OPPOSITION AND THE MORE LIKELY IT WILL BE THAT THE PCI WILL WIND UP IN THE CABINET.

ONCE AGAIN, THE QUESTION OF WHERE AND WHEN THE PCI MIGHT COME INTO THE CABINET WILL DEPEND IN LARGE MEASURE ON THE DC, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY. IT IS LIKELY THAT AFTER A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME THE PCI WILL BE PUSHED BY ITS BASE OR BY ITS LEADERSHIP'S CALCULATIONS TO SEEK ANOTHER "STEP FORWARD". SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THIS WILL OCCUR DURING THE "WHITE SEMESTER," OTHERS BELIEVE THAT THE PCI WILL WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AT THE TURN OF THE YEAR. IN EITHER EVENT, THE DC WILL PROBABLY FEEL CONSTRAINED TO REFUSE AND CALL FOR ELECTIONS.

8. THE DC'S STRATEGY WILL ALSO BE IMPORTANT. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO CENTER-LEFT ALTERNATIVE AT THIS TIME, MANY BELIEVE THAT, INSTEAD OF EMPHASIZING THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS AN EMERGENCY ONE AND LIMITED IN TIME, THE DC  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ROME 04267 02 OF 02 071917Z

WILL FOLLOW A STRATEGY ON LONG TERM COOPERATION WITH THE PCI IN AN EFFORT BOTH TO ENCOURAGE THE PCI'S EVOLUTION TOWARD WESTERN DEMOCRACY BUT ALSO TO WEAKEN THE PCI'S APPEAL TO THE ELECTORATE BY FORCING IT TO FACE UP TO HARD CHOICES AND SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTIONS. IF THIS LATTER STRATEGY IS FOLLOWED THE DC WILL ATTEMPT TO PROLONG THIS GOVERNMENT (OR A SIMILAR SUCCESSOR) AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. MORO AND ANDREOTTI TEND TOWARD THIS LATTER STRATEGY AND THUS IT WILL PROBABLY PREVAIL UNLESS THE PCI FORCES THE ISSUE, AS SUGGESTED ABOVE. ON THE OTHER HAND, SHOULD THE PSI AND PRI CHANGE THEIR PRESENT DIRECTION, THE DC WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE READY TO CHANGE WITH THEM.

9. HOW THE US SHOULD REACT: THIS CHANGE IN THE PCI'S POSITION PRESENTS US WITH DIFFICULT CHOICES. IT IS NOT LARGE ENOUGH OR DRAMATIC ENOUGH TO SUGGEST A LARGE, DRAMATIC US REACTION. ON THE OTHER HAND, OUR REACTIONS WILL BE CAREFULLY MONITORED BY THE ITALIANS. BOTH THE PROS AND CONS WILL ATTEMPT TO DEDUCE FROM OUR BEHAVIOR LIKELY USG REACTIONS TO THE NEXT COMMUNIST "STEP FORWARD" I.E., PARTICIPATION IN THE CABINET.

10 WE WILL WISH TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THIS STEP FORWARD BY THE PCI IS, IN OUR VIEW, A STEP IN THE WRONG DIRECTION. HOW WE MAKE THAT CLEAR WILL OBVIOUSLY DEPEND ON CIRCUMSTANCES AND ATMOSPHERE AS THE NEW GOVERNMENT GETS UNDERWAY. HOWEVER, THE ISSUE WILL INEVITABLY ARISE AND IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS: IN CONNECTION WITH HIGH-LEVEL VISITS, IN OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PCI, IN PROPOSALS FOR NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION

AND ASSISTANCE, IN MULTILATERAL FORA, ETC. WHILE THE  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ROME 04267 02 OF 02 071917Z

SPECIFICS ARE IMPORANT, HITTING THE RIGHT OVERALL  
TONE WILL BE ESSENTIAL. HOLMES

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FORM OF GOVERNMENT  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978ROME04267  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780103-0157  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** ROME  
**Handling Restrictions:**  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780397/aaaademb.tel  
**Line Count:** 233  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 4ec332cc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** ONLY, STADIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** ONLY, STADIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 18 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3416485  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF NEW ITALIAN GOVERNMENT  
**TAGS:** PINT, IT  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/4ec332cc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014